

So I would say, quite frankly, to my colleagues who decry the North American Free Trade Agreement, the NAFTA agreement, I would say, you are wrong, it has worked, it has done precisely as we wanted.

And I will yield, and we only have just about 5 more minutes, and we are going to close up, and I will yield to you, and then I will end.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Let me just mention that one of the big issues in the NAFTA negotiations was the failure of Mexico to enforce their own labor laws. They look good on paper, but they did not enforce them, and we have learned something from those NAFTA negotiations.

In those negotiations we made what is called a side agreement, and as a result of that, Mexican investment in enforcement of their own labor laws has increased 250 percent. In other words, we forced them to try to start enforcing their own laws, which were good on paper and lousy in reality, and in this new fast track authority we specifically include the right for the United States to negotiate the enforcement of domestic laws in labor and environment because lots of countries have good-sounding laws, but they do not enforce them, and that does make it harder for us to compete. So we have now expanded this negotiating authority to include enforcement of domestic laws because we did learn from those negotiations in Mexico the need for that breadth.

So this time we are not only asking for the President to have negotiating authority, but we are asking for that authority to reflect the experience that we have in what defends America's interest and what strengthens our own future and creates opportunity for our people.

Mr. KOLBE. I think the gentlelady's comments are right on target, and I think they summarize exactly why America needs to have fast track authority, why the President of the United States needs fast track authority, why we need to be able to pursue opportunities.

Opportunities for trade means opportunities for jobs for Americans. It means opportunities for American consumers. It means opportunities for our children and opportunities for the future. None of us in this body should be afraid of the future. The American people are not afraid of the future.

And this issue about fast track is not a partisan issue. It is an issue about whether we are going to lead, lead for ourselves and lead with the rest of the world.

And Republicans and Democrats alike have spoken out strongly on the issue of free trade, and I would like to simply end tonight with some quotations that I think very well express the importance of why we need to have these kinds of trade agreements.

The current Secretary of the Treasury, Bob Rubin, said this: We are now at a crossroads. The question before

Congress is whether to grant the President fast track so that we can continue to open markets, expand trade and raise standards of living here at home, or to refuse and watch as U.S. workers and businesses lose out in access to the opportunities in the global economy.

Brent Scowcroft was a White House national security adviser in President Reagan and President Bush's administration, and he said this: We cannot say we will lead on NATO and regional security, but not on trade. We cannot say we will lead on democracy and human rights, but not on trade. And we cannot say we will lead on the environment, but not on trade.

Senator Dole, Robert Dole, the former majority leader and Republican Presidential nominee this last campaign, said, global trade is inevitable and Presidential fast track authority is indispensable if America is to lead the community of nations into the next century.

And finally, the President of the United States, President Clinton, has said this: We owe it to the working men and women of America and around our entire country to level the playing field for trade so that when our workers are given a fair chance, they can and they do outcompete anyone anywhere in the world.

My colleagues, I appreciate my colleague from Connecticut participating with us this evening. I think it is very clear where the merits of this argument lie. We are confident about America's future, and I think we are confident that fast track authority will lead us into a brighter future for our children.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MENENDEZ (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for Tuesday, November 4, on account of election day in his home State of New Jersey.

Ms. MCKINNEY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), after 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 5, and on Thursday, November 6, on account of business in the district.

Ms. CARSON (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for Thursday, November 6, on account of official business in the district.

Mr. YATES (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for Thursday, November 6, after 5:30 p.m., and Friday, November 7, after 11 a.m., on account of personal reasons.

Mr. MICA (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for Thursday, November 6, until 6:30 p.m., on account of accompanying the President to the Bush Library dedication.

Mr. PORTMAN (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for Thursday, November 6, until 6:30, on account of attending the dedication of the George Bush Presidential Library.

Mr. QUINN (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, after 3:30, until 6

p.m., November 8, on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. GILLMOR (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), from today, 5 p.m., and for Saturday and Sunday, on account of personal reasons.

Mr. FORBES (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for Thursday, November 6, until 6:30 p.m., on account of attending the dedication of the George Bush Presidential Library.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DEFAZIO) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LIPINSKI, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCNULTY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CLAYTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POSHARD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TRAFICANT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LAFALCE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TOWNS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SANDERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. FURSE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOYER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RUSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KUCINICH, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GIBBONS) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SAXTON, for 5 minutes, each day, today and November 9.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEKAS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GIBBONS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PORTMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RIGGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KASICH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAPPAS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MORAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SANFORD, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. HANSEN, and to include therein extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost \$3,334.00.

ENROLLED BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that committee had examined and found